

TO

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, BART.

On the effect of Taxation with regard to the creating of paupers and the debasing of a people, as illustrated by the prices of food and of labour and by the farming expences, in the American Republic, compared with those in England.

Peckham Lodge, January 11, 1816.

SIR,—It is now about four years since, during a conversation on the effects of Taxation on a people at large, that the following question arose: *whether the labour, absolutely necessary to be performed to maintain men in civil society, would be performed, if the labourers, taking them in general, were not COMPELLED to work by the feeling or dread of immediate want.* Your opinion, from which I rather dissented, was in the affirmative. You observed, that it was a notion, inculcated by despots and their abettors, that men must be kept upon the verge of starvation to insure their steady application to labour; and you insisted, that the *dread of want* was a weaker inducement to labour than the *hope of acquiring property and independence.* In the course of the present letter I shall be able to produce the most complete proof of the correctness of this your opinion; but, my main object is, to lay before you and before the public a strong, and, I believe, unquestionable proof, *that pauperism and crimes are the natural offspring of heavy taxation.*

Upon more than one occasion, it has been shown, and, as I thought, clearly shown, that taxes must inevitably make a few rich and many poor; and, that the notion, so often inculcated by those who fatten on the taxes, that “like *deus col- lected in the cloud, they returned over the land in showers,*” was fallacious. But, still, whatever arguments were made use of to combat this notion, there wanted facts upon the subject. We had, indeed, the facts, that the increase of the *paupers* and of the *crimes* had kept an exact pace,

in England, with the increase of *taxation.* We could trace poverty, misery, ignorance, and crimes pretty clearly to this source; but, still there wanted such facts as I have now at my command.

In the month of August last, I wrote to a friend in Philadelphia, Mr. JOHN MORGAN, whom I name, because I will leave no doubt as to the authority on which I proceed, to send me answers to a number of questions. Mr. MORGAN, who is an Englishman, is a man in trade, and a person on whose report I can place perfect reliance, having known him intimately for twenty years. The information required was stated by me to be intended to be publicly used; and, as it included many heads belonging to country affairs, I requested him to apply, in those cases, to some mutual friends of ours, who are persons of landed estates, and some of whom cultivate their own land. The paper, containing my questions, has been returned to me with the *answers* required. I shall here insert a copy of the whole of the paper, as it stands filled up by Mr. Morgan; but, previously I must make a remark or two as to the relative value of the *money* or *currency*, of the two countries.

Paper is, at present, the currency in both countries. The American paper is, in a letter of Mr. Morgan accompanying the answers to my questions, stated to be 18 per centum under the value of its nominal amount in real dollars. One of our Bank Dollars, which is not so good as a Spanish Dollar, passes for 5s. 6d. *here*, though the Spanish Dollar is, in sterling money, worth, at most, no more than 4s. 6d. So that, upon the whole, the paper-currency of America is in much about the same state of depreciation as ours is *at this time.* Be it observed, however, that this has little to do with the main points, to which I wish to draw your attention; namely, the price of *food*, compared with that of *labour*; and the amount of *labour* on a farm, compared with that of the *taxes* on the same farm. You will perceive, that the sums are here stated in

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Dollars and Cents. The Cent is the hundredth part of a Dollar. I will insert the answers just as I have received them, and will add the average price, in our own present currency, in a separate column, looking upon the Dollar in America to be equal to 5s. of our currency, not, however, thinking it worth while to be nice to a mere fraction. In the case of the farming expences, I thought best to point my questions to one particular

farm; a farm every inch of which I was well acquainted with; the proprietor of which I well knew; in order that, when I came to make use of my information, I might be able to speak with more confidence and in a manner more circumstantial.

Having thus premised, I will first insert the paper, and then solicit your attention to the remarks which I have to make upon it. It is as follows:

QUESTIONS.	ANSWERS.	AVERAGE in English MONEY.		
		£	s.	d.
What are the usual wages of a labouring man in a farm-house, per year?	140 Dollars	35	0	0
What is the daily pay of a harvest man?	{ 1 Dollar to 125 Cents. if } { found in food and liquor .. }	0	5	7½
What is the usual wages of a woman servant in a farm-house, per year?	53 Dollars	13	0	0
What is the price of a pretty good cow, 4 years old? ..	40 to 60 Dollars	12	10	0
What is the price of a pretty good cart-horse, 4 yrs. old?	80 to 90 Dollars	21	5	0
What is the price of a good new farm-waggon?	100 Dollars	25	0	0
What is the price of a good new farm cart?	30 to 40 Dollars	8	15	0
What is the whole number of acres of JAMES PAUL'S farm?	260			
How many acres of ploughing land?	175			
How many of orchard?	10			
How many of meadow?	30			
How many of woods?	45			
What is the amount of all the direct taxes he pays to the government in a year?	Look at Book sent you			
What is the amount of his Poor Taxes in a year?	27 Dollars	6	15	0
How many bushels of wheat grow, on an average, on an acre of well-prepared land?	20			
What is the common price of a bushel of wheat?	162 Cents to 2 Dollars	0	8	0
How many bushels of Indian corn grow upon an acre of land?	20 to 25			
What is the usual price per bushel?	1 Dollar, in the field, this fall.	0	5	0
What is the price of a bushel of malt?	125 Cents	0	6	3
What is the pay, per day, of a journeyman carpenter at Philadelphia?	150 Cents	0	7	6
What is the pay, per day, of a journeyman bricklayer at Philadelphia?	2 Dollars	0	10	0
What is the pay, per day, of a journeyman printer at Philadelphia?	150 Cents	0	7	6
What is the price of a pound of Mutton at Philadelphia?	6 Cents to 10 Cents	0	0	4½
..... of a pound of Beef?	8 Cents to 16 Cents	0	0	6½
..... of a pound of Butter?	31½ Cents to 37½ Cents.	0	1	8
..... of a Turkey?	75 Cents to 250 Cents.	0	6	9
..... of a Goose?	50 Cents to 100 Cents	0	3	9
..... of a Fowl?	31 Cents to 125 Cents	0	3	10
..... of a gallon of good American Beer? ..	40 Cents.	0	2	0
..... of a gallon of good French Brandy? ..	250 Cents } First Proof. ..	0	12	6
..... of a gallon of good West India Rum? ..	200 Cents }	0	10	0
..... of a pound of middling lump Sugar? ..	42 Cents	0	2	1
..... of a pound of white powder Sugar? ..	33 Cents	0	1	7½
..... of a pound of brown powder Sugar? ..	23 Cents	0	1	1½



QUESTIONS.	ANSWERS.	AVERAGE in English MONEY.
What is the price of a pound of white Soap?	27 Cents	£ s. d. 0 1 4½
..... of a pound of brown Soap?	16 Cents	0 0 10
..... of a pound of Coffee?	31 Cents	0 1 6½
..... of a pound of Souchong Tea?	2 Dollars	0 10 0
..... of a pound of dipped Candles?	25 Cents	0 1 3
..... of a pound of mould Candles?	28 Cents	0 1 4½
How many people have been hanged in Philadelphia, } since I was there, in 1799?	2 Negroes	

What new light, Sir, the bare perusal of this list throws on the most abstruse and most interesting questions of political economy! *Two necks* only, stretched, in the course of 15 years, in a city now containing, perhaps, 200,000 inhabitants, exclusive of the extensive and populous country, of which that city is the capital! Compare this, ye eulogists of taxation and the borough system; compare this with the hangings in London, and either confess, that you delight in death, or that you, at last, have some feelings of shame.

But, Sir, to this seemingly wonderful fact the preceding and following facts furnish a solution. In one line we are told, that the journeyman carpenter receives 7s. 6d. a day; and, in the next, that malt is 6s. 3d. a bushel. So that here is a journeyman of a very common trade, only one remove above a common labourer, who earns a bushel of malt a day, and 1s. 3d. over. Such a man, to become a thief, must have thievishness bred in his bones. The pay of the journeyman carpenter in London is about 4s. a day. Here he cannot earn more than about 3 gallons of malt, with nothing over. In Philadelphia he can earn more than 21 pounds of mutton a day; in London only 6 pounds. There 14 pounds of beef a day; here 5 pounds. There about 40 pounds of bread; here about 22 pounds. There a fine large turkey, and have 9d. left; here about half a turkey. There almost four gallons of beer; here not more than 2 gallons. There 3 quarts of best Jamaica rum; here not, I suppose, much more than one pint.

But the important facts, those facts, which, with their illustrations, will bring us to as close quarters with the borough-mongers as a Noble Lord wished to be brought with the reformers, are those which relate to *farm expences*. You will

perceive, Sir, that Mr. PAUL's farm consists of 260 acres of land, the acre being the same as our statute acre. I have one particular farm of 250 acres. Now, what I am going to exhibit here is, the out-going of our two farms, as far as *labour and direct taxes* go; and herein to show, as clear as day-light, I think, the real cause of pauperism and degeneracy. I shall suppose the two farms to be of equal goodness as to their quality of producing. I have 20 acres of wood more than Mr. Paul; I have less meadow; and, while I have about a quarter of an acre of orchard, he has 10 acres, out of which, as he wrote to me about seven years ago, he made 60 hogsheads of cyder in one year. Mine is a common old English farmhouse; his an excellent square stone house, with sash windows, four rooms on a floor, and even the ground-floor, except the kitchen, boarded. Add to this, that his farm lies within eleven or twelve miles of Philadelphia, near one of the great roads to New York. However, the relative value of the farms is not of much consequence in this case; the chief object being to show what portion of the *expences* of each goes to the *labourer* and what portion into any *other channel*. My expences consist of *labour*, *poor-tax*, *tithe*, *property-tax*, *window-tax*, *horse-tax*, *house-tax*, and *dog-tax*, the indirect taxes being left out of the question, they being paid, in both cases, in the price of the commodities which we consume. His expences consist of *labour*, *poor-tax*, and *direct-tax* paid to the general government, on account of the war. *Road taxes* are not to be reckoned, because, though I pay a great deal more than he, on this account, it is so much laid out for my own benefit. Mr. Morgan refers me, for an account of the *direct-tax* to a *book*, which he has sent me, but which

is not come to hand. The whole of this tax, in the United States, amounted last year to 6 millions of dollars, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ million of our present money. Apparently it had not been collected of Mr. Paul when the foregoing inquiries were made. It is now proposed, I see, to reduce it one half immediately, in consequence of the peace. But, taking the war-standard there as well as here, I shall suppose the 6 millions to be in train of collection now, and, upon that ground, I will estimate Mr. Paul's direct tax at 60 Dollars, or 15 pounds of our money. This is, I should suppose, over doing it very largely; but the difference cannot be very material.

With regard to the *quantity of labour* necessary to the proper cultivation of the two farms, there can be very little difference. I will, therefore suppose, that we each of us employ, all the year round, five labourers, at full wages. This is not the case. Sometimes I have more and sometimes less. So it must be with him. He used to labour himself, and that was worth two men. He has a son worth four such men as some that I have had the misery to see. Supposing the five men on

HIS			
	£.	s.	d.
5 Men at 140 Dollars, or \$5l.....	175	0	0
2 Women at 13l.....	26	0	0
Labour, exclusive of board	£201	0	0
Poor Tax	7	0	0
Direct Tax	15	0	0
	£223	0	0

Thus, you see, Sir, that this American farmer's *expences* are much about the same as mine. I am, in this respect, as well off as he. He can make no more of his farm than I can of mine, unless he exceed me in skill and industry, or, unless he labour himself; and, then, of course, all his skill, industry, and labour, are to be charged in the amount against him, seeing that they would bring their value if employed in any other way. But (and you will have perceived the jet of the illustration long enough ago), his expenditure is almost wholly in *labour*; mine almost wholly in *taxes*. His expen-

both sides, to be all fed and lodged in the house. We will leave the cost of the board and lodging out of the question too, because that must keep pace with the price of farm produce, and; it so happens, that the bushel of wheat there, at the date of Mr. Morgan's letter (10th November last) was, as nearly as possible, the price of the bushel of wheat here at and about Michaelmas, when our farm servants were last hired.

Now, Sir, Mr. Paul pays his man by the year 140 Dollars, or £35 of our money; and I know of no farm servant, hired into the house last Michaelmas, at higher wages than 10 pounds for the year. I believe, that you will find, if you inquire, that the average wages were much under this mark; but, I know of one man hired at 10 pound, and, therefore, I will take our general wages at that amount. In such a farm each must, to perform all the female part of the work, have two women servants; and the wages of ours would be now, I suppose, not more than £3 10s. each, while the wages of Mr. Paul's would be, as we have seen, 52 dollars, or £13 each. Our expences, then, will stand thus:

MINE			
	£.	s.	d.
5 Men at 10l.....	50	0	0
2 Women at 3l. 10s.....	7	0	0
Labour, exclusive of board	£57	0	0
Poor Tax	87	5	0
Property Tax	43	17	6
Assessed Tax on Horses, &c.....	15	10	0
Tythes	36	0	0
	£239	12	6

diture goes to make little fortunes for those who till his land; mine to support armies and navies, to maintain, on the one hand, splendour and dignity, and, on the other, to preserve from actual starvation those who can labour no longer, or whose labouring parents and husbands have died without being able to leave them the means of satisfying the calls of hunger and thirst.

If my labourer, with his 10 pounds a year, be able to purchase clothes, and to defray the other little expences of the year, so is the American labourer with 10 of his pounds, and then he has 25

pounds to save. This, Sir, is something like a "*saving bank*!" At the end of 7 years of labour, the latter is a man of property; the former still a poor labouring man, who, if he make shift with constant health, to keep from the poor-house to the age of fifty, can seldom do it beyond that period; and, if he has a family, they all become paupers even while the father is yet in his youth.

The difference in the lot of the labourers of the two countries is in no degree to be attributed to the will, or the disposition, of the employers; but solely to the difference in the demands of the two governments, made upon those employers. No more than a moderate profit can, from the effects of competition, and, indeed, from the very nature of things, remain, *upon an average*, to any description of employers in the ordinary callings of life. All beyond this must, and ever will, be taken away by somebody. If the government, or the church, or the pauper, does not take it away, the labourer will take it away. But, if the former take the greater portion, the latter must take the less; and, in whatever degree the demands of the former rise, the portion of the latter must fall; 'till, at last, he has pared down even beyond what is barely necessary to sustain animal life, and, then, to prevent him from expiring, an addition is made him in the shape of parish relief, which as you well know, is the case in almost every parish in the kingdom. What, then, becomes, Sir, of BURKE's eulogy on taxes, when he called them "the dews of superfluity, drawn up by the sun of government, to be sent back in showers to fertilize and bless the country?" Much more apt would his figure have been, if he, in drinking the wine, bought with his pension, had said: "Come! here go the sweat and blood of the labourer."

The poor taxes in America are employed to relieve persons who fall into *misfortune*, who want *aid*, either from sickness, or some *accident*; and, indeed, I believe, that the greater part of the sums thus raised, go to assist persons *to get out of a state of poverty*. And then the sum is so small, when compared with the amount of labour. Thus, you see, that Mr. Paul's poor taxes amount, in a year, to only *one fifth of the wages of one labourer*; whereas mine amount to the *whole wages*

of nearly nine labourers, or, to *forty five times* as much as his poor taxes, compared with the amount of labour on both sides. Is it any wonder that our country is filled with wretchedness? Is it any wonder, that almost the whole of our labourers are paupers, when we see, that of the produce of the land so large a portion is taken away by the government, and so small a portion left to those who till that land, and who perform the other labours of the country? It would be the same as to all trades and callings, if we were to push our inquiries into them. We should every where find the master tradesman so hardly pressed by the tax-gatherer as to be obliged to pare down his journeymen as close as possible; and, we should trace the journeyman and his family to the poor-house through the same chain of causes that impel the labourer and his family to the same miserable end.

Mr. BENETT, of Pitt-House, in Wiltshire, said upon his oath before a committee of the House of Commons, that, in his parish, they allowed *to each person in a labourer's family the price of a gallon loaf a week, and 3d. over*. A gallon loaf weighs 8lb. 10oz. So that here is only *a pound and a quarter of bread a day* for each poor creature, one, at least, of whom is to work from morning 'till night. Here is neither meat nor clothes nor fuel nor bedding, except as much as each creature can buy with 3d. per week. And yet, Sir, it is to creatures like these that people are proposing to give *learning*!

As the *miseries* of the people have increased *crimes* have increased, and people have taken it into their heads, that the want of *education*, as they call it, is the cause of crimes. Hence all the School and Bible schemes. Granted that *ignorance*, properly so called, is one of the parents of crimes; but, the parents of ignorance are poverty and misery, and as these spring, and ever must spring, from that taxation, which leaves the labourer no encouragement to be industrious and no means of husbanding earnings, it is all in vain to attempt to enlighten his mind, while the load of taxation remains. The innumerable thefts committed on our farms, against which no vigilance and no locks and bars can protect us; the cheatings, the low cunning, the *falseness*, of the labouring classes, the pilferings of ser-

vants, the meanness, the shameless baseness of all the tribe of coach drivers, waiters, chambermaids, porters, &c. All these arise from the same cause. Their employers are unable to *pay* them sufficiently for their labour, because the demands of the government upon the employers take away so large a part of that which would otherwise go to reward labour. This is the great cause of the degeneracy of the people; this is the great source of all sorts of crimes; and, while this cause exists, School and Bible Societies will labour in vain. It is hunger joined to a meanness of soul engendered by an origin and a life of misery. All the institutions for charitable purposes, the Societies for the suppression of vice, for the relief of the distressed, for giving premiums for industry, for the forming of "*Saving Banks*:" these, and scores of others that exist, are mere expedients for the mitigating of the evils of heavy taxation; and, if Mr. GEORGE ROSE were to apply the amount of his salaries and sinecures to the paying of a couple of hundred of labourers, at the rate that my friend JAMES PAUL pays his labourers, he would soon see that his time might be better employed than in writing pamphlets about "*Saving Banks*," which are benevolently intended to receive, and put out to interest, the *surplus* earnings of poor creatures, whose allowance is a pound and a quarter of bread a day and 3d. per week over.

I have said, that it makes *no difference* to the *farmer* whether his expences consist of taxes and tythes, or of wages to labourers. But, I must beg to be understood as speaking here of a difference *merely pecuniary*, merely as relating to his profit; for, in other respects, the difference is very great indeed. In a *money* point of view, it is no difference to me, whether I pay the parson and the government and its *justices* (for they have a controul over my poor taxes) so many pounds in the year, or whether I pay these pounds to my labourers; but, if the labourers had the money it would be a much pleasanter life for me, seeing that I should then have to do with a very different sort of men, to say nothing of the pain which a heart almost of stone must experience, in the contemplation of misery so complete. Besides, that which I paid to my labourers could not possibly be used to

bear against my own liberties, and could not be expended in any of those various ways, which tend to keep the man who pays, and who does not receive, taxes, lower in the scale of society than he otherwise would be.

Even noblemen and gentlemen of large estates are in this way affected by the taxes. That which you, for instance, pay to the government and the church (for, in this view of the matter, it is all the same) you cannot have to pay to your servants and tradesmen. I agree, that, as to mere money you would be no gainer by the change. But, would you not rather give an additional £30 a year to your groom than to give that £30 to the tax-gatherer, who hands it over to the government?—Would you not rather see your groom, or your huntsman, in his old age, a man of property, and his family well settled in the world, than give the means of effecting this to support those whom you know nothing of? Would you not rather see your hall, like the hall of your forefathers, the crowded scene of feasting and mirth, than give away, into strange hands, as you now are compelled to do, the means of supporting this formerly amiable characteristic of an English gentleman's mansion? In short, would you not rather have the spending of your fortune yourself, than yield up two-thirds of it to be spent by somebody else, and, perhaps, for purposes of which you wholly disapprove?

There is a strange notion prevailing in England, that society, in America, is yet in a *rude* state; that the American is, and must be for some time, an *unpolished* nation; that, when they *become* polished, and when *great riches* are accumulated by individuals, they will have as much pauperism and as many crimes as we have; and, that ours has only been the unavoidable progress of *civilization* and *refinement*. If this were true, it would be impossible to deny, that, during this king's reign, we have made a most wonderful progress in the sublime arts of polishing and refining, seeing that, since 1760, the paupers have increased a hundred-fold. But, Sir, if I look back to the days of *Pope*, I do not perceive that there is much proof of an increase of the quantity of the highest of talent. If, by *polish* and *refinement*, are meant *hypocrisy* in all its various branches, we have certainly ar-

rived at the pinnacle. But, as to the Americans being in a *rude* state, on what is the notion founded? Their dress, their amusements, their manner of eating and drinking, are so much like ours, that, were it not for the absence of beggary, misery, and filthy streets, a man dropped down in an American town would imagine himself still in England. There is no science, no art, known in England, which is not studied and practised in America; and, in numerous instances, with greater success than in England. Their courts of justice have the same forms; law is administered in the same manner; in many cases it is the same law. In matters of commerce and navigation the Americans almost equal us, and are a fair way of surpassing us; and as to the affairs of war, whether by land or by sea, they have made us feel, and they have convinced all the world, that they want no lesson from any body.

Where, then, are we to look for these marks of comparative *rudeness*? Not in the speeches made in the Congress; not in the Notes and other papers of their diplomatic Ministers; for, as to these latter, it makes one blush for one's country to view their vast superiority. Is it in their friendly and dignified deportment towards foreign nations; in the wisdom and gentleness of their government and laws; in the peaceable behaviour of their citizens; in the absence of crimes, and in the want of rotten boroughs and a "*new drop*:" is it in any, or in all, of these, that we are to look for proofs of this alleged *rudeness*?

So far, Sir, from its being true, that the Americans are in a mass, compared to us, in a *rude* state, the very *contrary* is the truth. In America there are none of those *brogues*, or dialects, which distinguish Scotch and Irish and English and Yorkshiremen and Wiltshiremen and Cockneys from each other. These cease with the emigrant, whose children all speak good and correct English. In America reading and writing, and something beyond merely these, are universal. The American farmer has other charms under his roof besides those attending his hospitality. He can converse with you upon almost any subject. The Bible alone does not form *his* library. He comes in from the heat of the sun, stripped to his shirt, takes down a volume of his encyclope-

dia, or some book of science, travels, history, law, politics, or poetry. When he has rested himself, he returns to his fields or his yard. There is no law of his country, no regulation which he does not understand; no right that he possesses that he does not know how to go to work to defend; no public question in which he does not feel a lively interest, and as to which he is not able to express his opinion. I must be understood, of course, to speak with exceptions. There are stupid men in all countries. But, as a *general* description, I pledge myself for the truth of what I have here said, with the expectation that, in less than four months, this letter will find its way to every part of the country, of which I am speaking, and with very powerful reasons not to be looked upon, in that country, as a dealer in falsehoods, and more especially as a flatterer.

Well, then, Sir, if what I have here stated be true, will not you, with all your still unshaken attachment to Old England (and which, after all, I cannot refrain from participating with you); with all the sorrow that you must feel at seeing distant regions carry off the fruits of the talents, the labours and the sufferings of Sidney and of *Trooke*, will not your rising envy be stifled by that generosity which will make you exclaim, "blasted be the man who would destroy the harmony and freedom of such a people."

As to the effect of great individual fortunes on the liberties and moral state of the Americans, such fortunes already exist, and have long existed. There are men in America worth half a million of pounds sterling each. But, as these riches have not been derived from *taxes*, they have not impoverished and degraded any part of the community in their accumulation; and as it is impossible that they should be employed in the purchase of *Boroughs*, they do not appear to be dangerous to public liberty. The Edinburgh Reviewers flatter themselves, that these rich merchants will, in time, become the Lords of the country; and, they tell us, that our government ought to conciliate *their* friendship before hand. These wise critics know, or appear to know, very little about the matter. They seem very uneasy at the existence of a great democracy. They are anxious to see it converted into a "*more dignified*" state-

with “*a great body of aristocracy*, able “*to protect* the people against the throne, “and the throne against the people.” In short, they itch all over to see a list of “*Royal Burghs*” in America. I dare say the Americans will be much obliged to them for their anxiety; but, I am very sure, that they will think themselves better protected by their power of choosing their own public servants, than they would be by any “*great body of Nobles*,” even if imported from Scotland, and if Mr. JEFFREY himself were to go out as king. No, Sir, I do not believe, that the Americans will be very likely to fall upon the scheme of rearing a *throne* for the purpose of wanting “*a body of great Nobles*” to *protect* them against that throne. Such brilliant schemes they will leave, with all humility, to the *polished and refined* nations of Europe.

Now, Sir, after taking a review of what I have here done myself the honour to submit to your perusal, how wild, how ridiculous, appear the notions, which have lately been so much in vogue: namely, “that taxes, however heavy, do not injure “a community, because, though taken “from one man, they are given to another; “—that the amount of them still remains “amongst the whole of a people;—that “they do not tend to degrade the labourer, who must, under all changes “still be confined to what will satisfy the “mere calls of hunger and thirst;—that “it is no matter how great is a nation’s “debt, seeing that it owes it all to itself; “—that taxes and public debts are “riches”—and the like? How clearly do the foregoing facts and illustrations show all these notions to be false!

As to the topics which will form a very natural conclusion to this discussion; namely, the manner in which our taxes are assessed and levied; the number and description of persons employed in the business of examining into our private concerns in order to assess us; the purposes to which the taxes are applied; how they are spent in some glaring instances; and what is the effect, on our liberties, of this system of taxation and debts:—these and several other topics, connected with the interesting subject, are all perfectly familiar to you. But, they are not, and cannot be so familiar in other countries, and, as a thorough knowledge with regard to them must be of great benefit to a

people situated as the Americans are, I intend to treat of them, in the most ample manner, through the press of that country. I am, Sir,

With the greatest respect,
Your most humble and obedient servant,
WM. COBBETT.

P. S.—Sir,—Since writing the above, the President’s message to the Congress has come to hand. It is given below; and, from it you will learn how prosperous are the affairs of that great republic; nor will you forget, that the chief magistrate of America, now containing a population equal, perhaps, to that of England, Scotland, and Wales, is content with a salary of about 6,000 pounds a year. Let the advocates of *costly* government look at this. Let them compare the state of America with our state; let them view a commerce and navigation nearly equal to our own; let them look at the astonishing progress of manufactures in the Republic; let them look at her deeds in arms both by land and by sea; and, when they have so done, let them produce, if they can, one single reason in support of *costly* government. The present prosperity of the Republic is such as to beggar all description. What a contrast! England, at the end of her wars, is plunged into indescribable distress: America, at the end of her war, starts in a career of prosperity unparalleled.

I here insert an extract from a letter, written to me by a gentleman in Philadelphia in November last. From it also you will be able to judge of what is going on under the cheap government of America.

“The approaching session of Congress “will be an important one. There is “much to review, to establish, and to “provide for; but executive power has “obtained so much influence that it is “probable the session will be more occupied on that subject than on the “finances, the public credit, the peace “establishment, the navy, the treaty, “the import revenues, &c. There are “several candidates already in the list “for President,—MONRO, CLINTON, “CRAWFORD, J. Q. ADAMS, R. KING, “CH. JNO. MARSHALL. They appear, “at present, to stand the chances of “their order above. Indeed, the *federal* party have so much played the “fool; so much transcended all rational “ideas, both as the abusers of power

“ when in, and the abusers of liberty
 “ when out, that, as a party, they have
 “ no sort of chance for an ascendancy,
 “ unless when the Democrats become
 “ too corrupt to sustain themselves, or
 “ abuse their power equally with the
 “ federalists; then they may look for
 “ power. But the elements of parties
 “ will be totally dissolved and re-founded
 “ before that can happen.—The late war
 “ has made a great change in favour of
 “ national feelings here. The eastern
 “ people departed so much from their
 “ reputed cunning and sagacity as to in-
 “ volve all who had ever the name of
 “ thinking with them.—In civil or social
 “ affairs here, commerce never exhibited
 “ so much activity. Indeed, I suspect
 “ it will be over done, to the ruin of many
 “ adventurers here and of their creditors
 “ in England. The imports in amount,
 “ since the peace, have been unexampled,
 “ but various causes having banished the
 “ precious metals, the sort of credit
 “ attached to their presence has had a
 “ considerable influence on the exchange
 “ between the States. Internal industry
 “ has reached a height, of which you can
 “ form no adequate conception. The
 “ woollens of the coarse fabric leave the
 “ foreign coarse goods without price
 “ in the market. It is the same with
 “ coarse cottons. The *luxurious* arti-
 “ cles are those alone for which there
 “ is no competition here. I wear as
 “ good superfine broad cloth made here,
 “ at seven dollars, as can be brought here
 “ from England for eleven dollars. It
 “ is fashion alone which will sell the
 “ latter; and you may imagine how long
 “ fashion can prevail. Works in metal
 “ of every denomination have made a
 “ great progress. Argand lamps are made
 “ in this city from the raw material. At
 “ Pittsburgh we have glass girandoles
 “ engraved, equalling those of Venice in
 “ brilliancy and beauty. — Recollect,
 “ Pittsburgh is the *Fort Pitt* of 1763;
 “ and that town now contains 10,000
 “ inhabitants, and a new town is rising
 “ up, called *New Birmingham*, on the
 “ opposite side of the Monongehela.
 “ This city (Philadelphia) has tripled its
 “ settled extent since you were here.
 “ The improvements here are such as
 “ those who have not been out of Europe
 “ could not credit. We shall have two
 “ new States in the ensuing year, *Missi-*

“ *issippi* and *India*, both which have above
 “ 70,000 inhabitants. *Illinois* will follow
 “ in less than 4 years. It has 40,000 in-
 “ habitants.”

And, Sir, all this has taken place under
cheap government. This great nation has
 risen up under a government without
 splendour; without show of any kind;
 without an established church; without
 any power existing any where to restrain
 the expression of opinions regarding reli-
 gion; without a single soldier to give either
 protection or ornament to the chief ruler,
 or any officer, belonging to the govern-
 ment. This great nation has thus risen
 up without any power to enforce the law
 besides that of the constable's staff. All
 this prosperity, all the means of carrying
 on war with success, have been the work
 of laws framed by a Legislature, the mem-
 bers of which, together with the chief
 Magistrate himself, *have been elected by*
the people at large. Let the enemies of
 parliamentary reform show us, then, if
 they can, why similar effects, as far as
 local circumstances would admit, should
 not be produced by similar causes, in any
 other country as well as in America, and
 especially in that country from which the
 people of America originally went. Let
 them show us, why a free choice of repre-
 sentatives should not lead to prosperity
 here. Let them show us why this free
 choice, which has been accompanied with
 such beneficial effects in America, which
 produces peace and prosperity, which dis-
 penses with all military force except for
 the mere purposes of war, which leaves
 society almost without crimes: let them
 tell us, why that free choice of represen-
 tatives should not be tried in England.
 LORD MILTON expressed his wish to come
 to *close quarters* with the Reformers.
 His Lordship has here a very fair oppor-
 tunity of gratifying his wishes. Let him
 show us such prosperity here as I here
 show him under an elective govern-
 ment. Let him produce an assembly, like
 the American Congress, who know not
 what a soldier means, except as a per-
 son employed against a foreign enemy,
 Let them tell us how it is, that at the end of
 war, we find ourselves steeped in misery,
 while the happiness of America invites all
 the world to her shores.

It will no longer do, Sir, for the insol-
 ent foes of freedom to speak of America
 with *contempt*. Her population, com-

merce, navigation, manufactures, are all equal, or soon must be equal, to ours. Her statesmen and legislators yield to none in talent. Her armies and fleets have extorted the admiration of the whole world. She can no longer be looked upon as a little or a new nation; no longer can they pretend that her form of government is an experiment. All the predictions of those, who said she must have a king and an aristocracy, have been falsified. It is now clearly proved, that even the wealth of commerce is innoxious, where the smallness of the taxes leave so large a portion of income to the labourer as to cause a continual increase of independent men, and to deprive even the richest men of the power of gathering about them any very great body of dependents, while the general absence of want enables the very poorest of the people to obtain a sufficiency of useful education without the aid of *charities* or *societies*, the education derived from which is that of a pauper or beggar, and must bend the mind towards slavery rather than towards freedom.

REMEDIES.

SIR,—I have laid down the National Debt at a THOUSAND MILLIONS *in toto*; and I have intimated that the PEACE ESTABLISHMENT must be *new cast* to fit it in some measure to *existing circumstances*; for I suppose no man in his senses will assert that a certain analogy ought not to exist between *the head, the belly, and limbs*. Without entering into the *minutiae* of laboured detail,—without descending to the herculean invidious drudgery of weighing to a *scruple* every judge, clerk, placeman, minister, &c. &c. &c. &c. in that graduated balance which the outstretched arm of ECONOMY *must* now set up,—without absolutely fixing the *maximum* and *minimum* as applicable to pay, allowances, or salary of the above persons (though under the actual pressure, no man in office would, I think, be in danger of incurring public odium if he *declined* to receive more than £3000 per annum).—without doing all this, I think it will be sufficient to say, generally, that sinecures ought to be abolished; that no office, place, or situation under the crown, to which a salary is attached, ought now to be continued, unless *bona fide* necessary; and at all events, that where sala-

ries have been expressly raised to meet increased expenditure during the war, such salaries ought to revert to their original standard, as the cause of increase ceases to operate;—that the army and navy should instantly be put on the lowest practicable establishment;—and by the bye, upon the broad principle of national justice and common sense, it is to be hoped that the 30,000 British troops to be kept in France, will be fed, clothed, and paid, at the *entire* charge of that country. If the hand of retrenchment be prudently and rigidly applied, as here suggested, the Peace Establishment might certainly be brought within *ten* millions. Even this, with the interest of the National Debt, would give a total of near sixty millions to be provided for annually by taxes. I say nothing at present of the Sinking Fund. Allowing that in 1814 the amount of the permanent taxes was 44 millions, and of the war taxes 24 millions, in all 68 millions, I think it pretty evident for the reasons assigned in your last Register, that in 1816 the same taxes, considering the depreciation of agricultural produce, and the consequent operation of this depreciation on other articles of consumption, would not exceed 50 millions. If so, here would be at once a DEFICIT of *ten* millions! But if it should be thought decorous that the war taxes, which were avowedly laid on for the purposes of war, should not be continued in peace, then the DEFICIT would swell to *thirty* millions! However, as in that case, taxes, *under other names*, must be imposed to answer the exigency of the times, I will go on the supposition that the total revenue might yield 50 millions; and if so, remember we shall be taxed higher in proportion to the prices current, and to our intrinsic means, than we were during the war!—Well, then, what is the upshot of all this? Why, that the country will have to *pay nearly sixty millions out of fifty*! You have heard, perhaps, of the old Scotch taylor, who by dint of contrivance and second sight, with a little turning and twisting, made himself a tolerable coat, and his wife a very decent petticoat out of his uncle's old breeches! Without dwelling on the merits of this cross-legged artist, it would be very pleasing to us all if some of the Budget-makers could so far imitate his ingenuity, as to apply his principle of measuring, cutting, and managing,

to the business in hand. But as I have no great hopes on that score, I must proceed to my REMEDIES at once. If the mountain cannot go to Mahomet, the old adage is that Mahomet must go to the mountain; and so I fear it must be in the case before us. If we cannot by any human effort, short of downright exhaustion, screw up the old Tax Machine to a higher pitch than fifty millions, and in truth that is a fearful height, a dizzy height, nay, considering the prices current, it is a height apparently inaccessible even to the financial pinion of Mr. Huskisson—what then is to be done? Archimedes boasted that, could he but find a proper place to rest his machinery upon, he could move the terrestrial globe from its orbit; fortunately, the place he wanted was never discovered, and this poor world of ours was allowed to continue as the Almighty had placed it! So here, too, could Mr. H. but clap one foot on an *18s. bushel*, and the other on a *23 penny quartern loaf*, he might get a confounded good purchase, and I dare say screw up the machine to above 50 millions, even during a period of peace. But, Sir, we must take things as they actually are; and taking them as they are, I think myself fortified in again venturing it as my decided opinion, that fifty millions is the highest point, the *ne plus* to which taxation can possibly be carried. If so, how is an expenditure of sixty millions to be met by a revenue of fifty? This is an ugly question! it speaks volumes:—before it, the lady-like calculations of Edinburgh Reviewers lose all their *charm*, and prove hollow, shallow, and inconclusive. When they talked of the *permanent* revenue collected in 1814 as applicable to 1816, they should at least have endeavoured to shew that the current prices of the former year *would continue permanent* in the latter. This fact should have been established; for *on the permanency of the source*, that is of the current prices, must depend the *permanency of the revenue* thence arising. This they have not attempted to do; nay, I much doubt whether in their zeal and hurry, and pride of budget building, they would not have deemed it a reflection on their *genius*, to have consulted their understanding! And most assuredly, when, *sans ceremonie*, without even a *garde a vous*, at one stroke of the pen, they bring down the peace establishment to 7 millions, they must have concluded that

ministers, the royal household, judges, together with their wives and daughters, and the maids of honour, had come to some kind of patriotic resolution of living *on oatmeal*, and going *sans culotte*, according to Scotch costume: and that the soldiers and sailors, following up so brilliant an example, had made some sort of offer *to serve for nothing*, and live for a few years to come on those *immense loads of glory* acquired during the war! For, without some plan of this nature, it is difficult to imagine how Mr. Huskisson will be able to come down to this calculation. Oh no, no, ye wise men of the North, that will never do, I assure you:—no, 7 millions will not do at all; unless you could transfer the seat of government to the Orkneys, or some of your scraggy *hospitable* highlands towards the north pole, where want of roads and eternal snow, might preclude the expensive necessity of coaches, carriages, chariots, barouches; and where want of cooks, and want of any thing to eat, might preclude the unpleasant necessity of overmuch feasting and carousing;—for whatever the Reviewers may be pleased to say as to the *horned cattle* of all denominations which Scotland pours annually into our country, all the world knows the beef is put on in England. Yet I much doubt whether the logic of these Reviewers will prove sufficiently persuasive to draw these great folks so far North!—No, your seven millions will not do; *ten* is the very lowest which even I dare propose, and that sum must be well and frugally managed, *in order that all the servants of the crown may eat a little*. And, indeed, ten millions will appear no great matter, when you consider that Sir Timothy cannot endure the smell of claret, under half a guinea per bottle; and that my lady would rather go into hysterics than go to court without a cart load of jewels, and a few thousand pounds worth of brocade, tissue, and goose feathers, ostrich I would say. But, stop; it is high time I should apologize to you and to your readers for having allowed the *ignis fatuus* budget of those Edinburgh Reviewers, to carry us so far out of our path. If then my calculations are correct, if there shall exist a deficit of ten millions, what is to be done? If I have succeeded in shewing that the revenue, under existing circumstances, is not likely to exceed 50 millions, we shall in vain cast a wishful eye to that quarter—No; we must neither

delude nor flatter ourselves; we must learn to look at our situation fully in the face. Whither then shall we flee for succour?—Will our dear friends the Russians, or Prussians, or his Holiness the Pope, or the King of Naples, or the grateful Ferdinand of Spain, or the King of Holland, or any other royal personages let us have a few millions at this juncture, think you, to adjust our accounts a little? I fear not.—Will Louis stretch a point in our behalf? Oh, dear no, poor man, he is sadly put to it himself! Very well, then, after all our efforts and sacrifices, *does nobody care a stiver for us and our Budget?* You shake your head; then, by all that's good and gracious, Sir, *we have been fighting for some purpose during the last quarter of a century!!!* The remedy must be found at home, or it will be found no where. If the revenue cannot be increased to meet the expenditure, *the expenditure must be decreased to suit itself to the revenue.* Yes, you may hem and haw, and pisha, and shrug up the shoulders, you may twist and turn the point how you will, and which way you will, still you must come to that at last. The only method that occurs to me of decreasing the public expenditure, after having led the ungracious foot of strict economy into every private family, and most scrupulously annihilated every source of lavish or unnecessary expence under government, and by that means brought down the peace establishment as low as possible, would be *to diminish the interest on the National Debt ONE FIFTH.* I am perfectly aware of the extreme delicacy and importance of this subject. I am fully alive to the peril of establishing a precedent so novel, so dangerous; but, to remove these alarms I would propose that *the measure should originate with the fundholders themselves.* The faith of government, the great pillars of public credit, public security, and confidence, would be too seriously shaken and endangered by the agitation of such a measure in parliament. No, Sir, nothing, not even the urgent necessity of the thing, could excuse, much less justify such a proceeding. To divest it of all objections, and give it all the weight and advantage of which it is susceptible, I think it expedient that it should be the sole, the spontaneous act of the fundholders themselves: such a commendable and patriotic sacrifice on the part of the fundholders would, I

know, involve many objects for mature consideration; some of which, with your usual penetration, you did not fail to foresee and point out in a former Register. But it would be matter of regret if a measure so necessary and beneficial should fall to the ground, merely because a few awkward difficulties happen to give it a somewhat forbidding aspect. It is enough for me to have pointed out *the remedy*, and the persons by whom it should be prescribed:—the measure is perfectly capable of those ulterior arrangements and qualifications, which will remove all obstacles. After all, though in my next I may probably dwell a little longer on this point, I do not mean to say that this remedy is very delectable or even palatable; but a man must be an idiot, if, after having feasted himself up to the eyes on turtle and turtle soup, he would on the morrow, rather die of starvation, than put up with a mutton chop. Besides, let it be remembered that even at 4 per centum, the fundholder will still have many little comforts about him; and though he may turn up his nose at the dwindled size of his decanter (*dwindled, alas! from a bottle to a pint,*) yet he may still hug himself, and laugh in his sleeve as he beholds the pitiful farmer, grumbling and croaking over his small beer, or squatting, like Job, though not so patiently, on his wretched dunghill. If it be asked, how shall the fundholders, (though burning with impatience to come forward) come to any thing like a general understanding on this great matter?—The answer is, let a few prominent capitalists set the business afloat:—an advertisement in your Register, which I believe visits every week every town in England, soliciting the YEAS, not nays, by parishes, *would operate like wild fire*; from the Land's end to the Orkneys not a *no* would be heard!!! Let those who object to this remedy have the goodness to point out the grounds of any measure of equal utility and magnitude, that shall be fraught with less inconvenience. As to setting more paper afloat, I do look upon that as the most ruinous of all ruinous expedients.

B. R.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

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AMERICA.

Washington, Dec. 5, 1815.—This day, at twelve o'clock, the President of the United States transmitted to both Houses

of Congress, the following Message, by Mr. Todd, his Secretary :—

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and the House of Representatives,—I have the satisfaction, on our present meeting, of being able to communicate to you the successful termination of the war which had been commenced against the United States by the Regency of Algiers. The squadron, in advance, on that service, under Commodore Decatur, lost not a moment after its arrival in the Mediterranean, in seeking the naval force of the enemy, then cruising in that sea, and succeeded in capturing two of his ships, one of them the principal ship, commanded by the Algerine Admiral. The high character of the American Commander was brilliantly sustained on the occasion, which brought his own ship into close action with that of his adversary, as was the accustomed gallantry of all the officers and men actually engaged. Having prepared the way by this demonstration of American skill and prowess, he hastened to the port of Algiers, where peace was promptly yielded to his victorious force. In the terms stipulated, the rights and honour of the United States were particularly consulted, by a perpetual relinquishment, on the part of the Dey, of all pretensions to tribute from them. The impressions which have thus been made, strengthened as they will have been by subsequent transactions with the Regencies of Tunis and Tripoli, by the appearance of the larger force which followed under Commodore Bainbridge, the chief in command of the expedition, and by the judicious precautionary arrangements left by him in that quarter, afford a reasonable prospect of future security, for the valuable portion of our commerce which passes within reach of the Barbary cruisers.

It is another source of satisfaction that the Treaty of Peace with Great Britain has been succeeded by a convention on the subject of commerce, concluded by the Plenipotentiaries of the two countries. In this result a disposition is manifested on the part of that nation, corresponding with the disposition of the United States, which, it may be hoped, will be improved into liberal arrangements on other subjects, on which the parties have mutual interests, or which might endanger their future harmony. Congress will decide on the expediency of promoting such a sequel, by giving effect to the measure of confining the American navigation to American seamen; a measure which, at the same time that it might have that conciliatory tendency, would have the further

advantage of increasing the independence of our navigation, and the resources of our maritime rights.

In conformity with the articles of the Treaty of Ghent, relating to the Indians, as well as with a view to the tranquillity of our western and north-western frontiers, measures were taken to establish an immediate peace with the several tribes who had been engaged in hostilities against the United States. Such of them as were invited to Detroit acceded readily to a renewal of the former treaties of friendship. Of the other tribes who were invited to a station on the Mississippi, the greater number have also accepted the peace offered to them. The residue, consisting of the more distant tribes, or parts of tribes, remain to be brought over by further explanations, or by such other means as may be adapted to the disposition they may finally disclose.

The Indian tribes within, and bordering on our southern frontiers, whom a cruel war on their part had compelled us to chastise into peace, have lately shown a restlessness, which has called for preparatory measures for repressing it, and for protecting the Commissioners engaged in carrying the terms of the peace into execution.

The execution of the act for fixing the military peace establishment, has been attended with difficulties which even now can only be overcome by legislative aid. The election of officers; the payment and discharge of the troops enlisted for the war; the payment of the retained troops, and their re-union from detached and distant stations; the collection and security of the public property, in the quarter-master, commissary and ordinance departments; and the constant medical assistance required in hospitals and garrisons, rendered a complete execution of the act impracticable on the first of May, the period more immediately contemplated. As soon, however, as circumstances would permit, and as far as it had been practicable, consistently with the public interest, the reduction of the army has been accomplished; but the appropriations for its pay, and for other branches of the military service, having proved inadequate, the earliest attention to that subject will be necessary; and the expediency of continuing upon the peace establishment the Staff Officers, who have hitherto been provisionally retained, is also recommended to the consideration of Congress.

In the performance of the executive duty upon this occasion, there has not been wanting a just sensibility to the merits of the Ame-

rican Army during the late war; but the obvious policy and design in fixing an efficient military peace establishment, did not afford an opportunity to distinguish the aged and infirm, on account of their past services; nor the wounded and disabled, on account of their present sufferings. The extent of the reduction, indeed, unavoidably involved the exclusion of many meritorious officers of every rank, from the service of their country; and so equal, as well as so numerous, were the claims to attention, that a decision by the standard of comparative merit, could seldom be attained. Judged, however, in candour, by a general standard of positive merit, the Army Register will, it is believed, do honour to the establishment; while the case of those officers, whose names are not included in it, devolves, with the strongest interest, upon the legislative authority, for such provision as shall be deemed the best calculated to give support and solace to the veteran and invalid; to display the beneficence as well as the justice of the Government; and to inspire a martial zeal for the public service, upon every future emergency.

Although the embarrassments arising from the want of an uniform national currency have not been diminished, since the adjournment of Congress, great satisfaction has been derived, in contemplating the revival of the public credit, and the efficiency of the public resources. The receipts into the Treasury from the various branches of revenue, during the nine months ending on the 30th of September last, have been estimated at twelve millions and a half of dollars; the issues of Treasury Notes of every denomination, during the same period, amounted to the sum of fourteen millions of dollars: and there was also obtained upon the loan, during the same period, a sum of nine millions of dollars, of which the sum of six millions of dollars was subscribed in cash, and the sum of three millions of dollars in Treasury notes.—With these means, added to the sum of one million and a half of dollars, being the balance of money in the Treasury on the 1st of January, there has been paid, between the 1st of January and the 1st of October, on account of the appropriations of the preceding and of the present year (exclusively of the amount of the Treasury Notes subscribed to the loan, and the amount redeemed in the payment of duties and taxes), the aggregate sum of thirty-three millions and a half of dollars, leaving a balance then in the Treasury estimated at the sum of three millions of dollars. Independent, however, of the arrearages due for

military services and supplies, it is presumed, that a further sum of five millions of dollars, including the interest on the public debt, payable on the 1st of January next, will be demanded at the Treasury to complete the expenditures of the present year, and for which the existing ways and means will sufficiently provide.

The national debt, as it was ascertained on the 1st of October last, amounted in the whole to the sum of one hundred and twenty millions of dollars, consisting of the unredeemed balance of the debt contracted before the late war (thirty-nine millions of dollars), the amount of the funded debt contracted in consequence of the war, (sixty-four millions of dollars, and the amount of the unfunded and floating debt (including the various issues of Treasury Notes), seventeen million of dollars is in a gradual course of payment. There will, probably, be some addition to the public debt, upon the liquidation of various claims which are depending; and a conciliatory disposition on the part of Congress may lead honourably and advantageously to an equitable arrangement of the militia expences, incurred by the several States, without the previous sanction or authority of the Government of the United States. But, when it is considered that the new, as well as the old, portion of the debt has been contracted in the assertion of the national rights and independence; and when it is recollected, that the public expenditures, not being exclusively bestowed upon subjects of a transient nature, will long be visible in the number and equipments of the American navy, in the military works for the defence of our harbours and our frontiers, and in the supplies of our arsenals and magazines; the amount will bear a gratifying comparison with the objects which have been attained, as well as with the resource of the country.

The arrangement of the finances, with a view to the receipts and expenditures of a permanent peace establishment, will necessarily enter into the deliberations of Congress during the present session. It is true, that the improved condition of the public revenue will not only afford the means of maintaining the faith of the Government with its creditors inviolate, and of prosecuting successfully the measures of the most liberal policy; but will also justify an immediate alleviation of burthens imposed by the necessities of the war. It is, however, essential to every modification of the finances, that the benefits of an uniform national currency should be restored to the commu-

nity. The absence of the precious metals, will, it is believed, be a temporary evil; but until they can be again rendered the general medium of exchange, it devolves on the wisdom of Congress to provide a substitute, which shall equally engage the confidence, and accommodate the wants of the citizens throughout the Union. If the operation of the state banks cannot produce this result, the probable operation of a national bank will merit consideration; and if neither of these expedients be deemed effectual, it may become necessary to ascertain the terms upon which the notes of the Government, (no longer required as an instrument of credit) shall be issued, upon motives of general policy, as a common medium of circulation.

Notwithstanding the security for future repose which the United States ought to find in their love of peace, and their constant respect for the rights of other nations, the character of the times particularly inculcates the lesson, that, whether to prevent or repel danger, we ought not to be unprepared for it. This consideration will sufficiently recommend to Congress a liberal provision for the immediate extension and gradual completion of the works of defence, both fixed and floating, on our maritime frontier, and an adequate provision for guarding our inland frontier against dangers to which certain portions of it may continue to be exposed.

As an improvement on our military establishment, it will deserve the consideration of Congress, whether a corps of invalids might not be so organized and employed, as at once to aid in the support of meritorious individuals, excluded by age or infirmities from the existing establishment, and to preserve to the public the benefit of their stationary services, and of their exemplary discipline. I recommend, also, an enlargement of the military academy already established, and the establishment of others in other sections of the Union. And I cannot press too much on the attention of Congress, such a classification and organization of the militia, as will most effectually render it the safeguard of a free state. If experience has shewn, in the late splendid achievements of militia, the value of this resource for the public defence, it has shewn also the importance of that skill in the use of arms, and that familiarity with the essential rules of discipline, which cannot be expected from the regulations now in force. With this subject is ultimately connected the necessity of accommodating the laws, in every

respect, to the great object of enabling the political authority of the Union to employ, promptly and effectually, the physical power of the Union, in the cases designated by the Constitution.

The signal services which have been rendered by our navy, and the capacities it has developed for the successful co-operation in the national defence, will give to that portion of the public force its full value in the eyes of Congress, at an epoch which calls for the constant vigilance of all Governments. To preserve the ships now in a sound state; to complete those already contemplated; to provide amply the unperishable materials for prompt augmentations, and to improve the existing arrangements into more advantageous establishments, for the construction, the repairs, and the security of vessels of war, is dictated by the soundest policy.

In adjusting the duties on imports to the object of revenue, the influence of the tariff on manufactures will necessarily present itself for consideration. However wise the theory may be, which leaves to the sagacity and interest of individuals the application of their industry and resources, there are in this, as in other cases, exceptions to the general rule. Besides the condition which the theory itself implies, of a reciprocal adoption by other nations, experience teaches, that so many circumstances must occur in introducing and maturing manufacturing establishments, especially of the more complicated kinds, that a country may remain long without them, although sufficiently advanced, and in some respects even peculiarly fitted for carrying them on with success. Under circumstances giving a powerful impulse to manufacturing industry, it has made among us a progress, and exhibited an efficiency, which justify the belief, that with a protection not more than is due to the enterprising citizens whose interests are now at stake, it will become, at an early day, not only safe against occasional competitions from abroad, but a source of domestic wealth, and even of external commerce. In selecting the branches more especially entitled to the public patronage, a preference is obviously claimed by such as will relieve the United States from a dependence on foreign supplies, ever subject to casual failures, for articles necessary for the public defence, or connected with the primary wants of individuals. It will be an additional recommendation of particular manufactures, where the materials for them are extensively drawn from our agriculture, and conse-

quently impart and insure to that great fund of national prosperity and independence, an encouragement which cannot fail to be rewarded.

Among the means of advancing the public interest, the occasion is a proper one for recalling the attention of Congress to the great importance of establishing throughout our country the roads and canals, which can best be executed under the national authority. No objects within the circle of political economy so richly repay the expence bestowed on them: there are none, the utility of which is more universally ascertained and acknowledged; none that do more honour to the Government, whose wise and enlarged patriotism duly appreciates them. Nor is there any country which presents a field, where nature invites more the art of man, to complete her own work for his accommodation and benefit. These considerations are strengthened, moreover, by the political effect of these facilities for intercommunication, in bringing and binding more closely together the various parts of our extended confederacy. Whilst the States, individually, with a laudable enterprise and emulation, avail themselves of their local advantages, by new roads, by navigable canals, and by improving the streams susceptible of navigation, the general Government is the more urged to similar undertakings requiring a national jurisdiction, and national means, by the prospect of thus systematically completing so inestimable a work. And it is a happy reflection, that any defect of constitutional authority, which may be encountered, can be supplied in a mode which the constitution itself has providently pointed out.

The present is a favourable season also for bringing again into view the establishment of a national seminary of learning within the district of Columbia, and with means drawn from the property therein subject to the authority of the general Government. Such an institution claims the patronage of Congress, as a monument of their solicitude for the advancement of knowledge, without which the blessings of liberty cannot be fully enjoyed or long preserved; as a model instructive in the formation of other seminaries; as a nursery of enlightened preceptors; as a central resort of youth and genius from every part of their country, diffusing on their return examples of those national feelings, those liberal sentiments, and those congenial manners, which contri-

bute cement to our union, and strength to the great political fabric of which that is the formation.

In closing this communication, I ought not to repress a sensibility in which you will unite, to the happy lot of our country, and to the goodness of a superintending Providence, to which we are indebted for it.—Whilst other portions of mankind are labouring under the distresses of war, or struggling with adversity in other forms, the United States are in the tranquil enjoyment of prosperous and honourable peace. In reviewing the scenes through which it has been attained, we can rejoice in the proofs given, that our political institutions, founded in human rights, and framed for their preservation, are equal to the severest trials of war, as well as adapted to the ordinary periods of repose.—As fruits of this experience, and of the reputation acquired by the American arms, on the land and on the water, the nation finds itself possessed of a growing respect abroad, and of a just confidence in itself, which are among the best pledges for its peaceful career.

Under other aspects of our country, the strongest features of its flourishing condition are seen in a population rapidly increasing, on a territory as productive as it is extensive; in a general industry, and fertile ingenuity, which find their ample rewards; and in an affluent revenue, which admits a reduction of the public burthens without withdrawing the means of sustaining the public credit, of gradually discharging the public debt, of providing for the necessary defensive and precautionary establishments, and of patronising, in every authorised mode, undertakings conducive to the aggregate wealth and individual comfort of our citizens.

It remains for the guardians of the public welfare, to persevere in that justice and good will towards other nations, which invite a return of these sentiments towards the United States; to cherish institutions which guarantee their safety, and their liberties, civil and religious; and to combine with a liberal system of foreign commerce, an improvement of the natural advantages, and a protection and extension of the independent resources of our highly favoured and happy country.

In all measures, having such objects, my faithful co-operation will be afforded.

JAMES MADISON.

Washington, Dec. 5, 1815.